



**MEETING SUMMARY**  
**WATER RESOURCES ADVISORY COMMISSION**  
**LAKE OKEECHOBEE (Lake) ISSUES WORKSHOP**  
**South Florida Water Management District**  
**3301 Gun Club Road, West Palm Beach, FL 33406**  
**Monday, August 25, 2003**

**Attendees:**

**Members:**

Patrick Hayes  
Barbara Miedema  
Fred Rapach

Joe Walsh  
Howard Wegis

**Alternates:**

Gene Duncan  
Byron Maharrey

John Mitnik

**Interested Parties:**

John Adornato  
Danna Ackerman-White  
David Bogardus  
Paul Gray  
Larry Harris  
Lisa Interlandi  
Tom MacVicar  
Frank Marsocci  
Linda McCarthy  
Roland Ottolini

Beth Carlson-Lewis  
Erin Deady  
Rebecca Elliott  
Ros Ferguson  
Mary Ann Gosa  
Irene Quincey  
Ron Smola  
Sonia Villamil  
Theresa Woody  
Tom Wright

**SFWMD Staff:**

Ken Ammon  
Missie Barletto  
Kirk Burns  
Susan Gray

Karl Havens  
Bob Howard  
Benita Whalen

**1. Welcome:** Review of Today's Agenda and any changes by Garrett Wallace, Deputy Department Director, Department of Public Information, SFWMD. Meeting called to order at 10:10 a.m. Introductions were made by all attendees. Welcome to Commission Juda from Lee County.

**Presentation:**

**2. Establish Goals and Mission of the Group by** Garrett Wallace. Mr. Wallace asked for feedback from the group on what the members hope to accomplish. Susan Gray, Ph.D., Division Director, Lake Okeechobee Division, SFWMD, provided information and stated what she believed the goals of the group should be to assist in the plan for Lake Okeechobee.

Discussion on what the focus of the group should be and suggestions made on topics to cover by stakeholders. Mr. Wallace noted the suggested topics.

**3. Lake Okeechobee Status and Condition by Karl Havens, Ph.D., Chief Environmental Scientist, Lake Okeechobee Division, SFWMD.**

Dr. Havens provided information on the key areas of concern:

- Lack of spring recession;
- Sustained high water levels;
- Loss of bulrush and shoreline grass;
- Loss of submerged vegetation (SAV);
- Development of north shore berm; and
- Algae blooms in shoreline areas.

Information on the Lake levels was provided.

A question and answer session was held on several topics. Several requests were made for further assistance for the estuaries, Lake Caloosahatchee, and Conservation 3A.

The level of the Lake and releases that have been done to maintain the Lake levels were discussed extensively.

**4. Lake Okeechobee Protection Plan (Plan) by Susan Gray.**

Dr. Gray presented information on the Plan with a revised draft date of August 25, 2003. Alternatives and costs are not in the Plan to allow for input from this group and other stakeholders. She requested comments back from the group within the next month.

The three major environmental impacts were presented along with the Lake Okeechobee Protection Bill elements. A map showing the Lake watershed basins was discussed. The total project area is approximately 3.5 million acres in size.

The Plan's requirements and characteristics were outlined. The Plans formulation process and the planning steps were summarized – (1) Problem identification; (2) development of evaluation criteria; (3) formulation of alternatives; and (4) evaluation of alternatives.

The current activities taking place in the Lake Okeechobee Watershed was reviewed.

Information on the current phosphorus reduction activities was presented. Alternatives were listed as: Alternative 1 -- LOPP P Reduction Tools; The Lake O Watershed Project; Exotic plant controls; and Research and monitoring program. Alternative 2 – LOPP P Reduction Tools – Typical Cost share BMPs that require future funding, other regional projects, alternative practices; The Lake O Watershed Project; Exotic plant control; and Research and monitoring program. Issues are the Tributary TMDLs; Nutrient Balance; C-43, C-44 CERP Projects; and S-4 Division.

A question and answer session was held.

The schedule for the Plan was reviewed by Dr. Gray. The Plan will be presented to the SFWMD Governing Board in December 2003 and then forwarded to the Florida State Legislature.

Further general questions.

#### **5. Questions and Answers by Garrett Wallace.**

Again, Dr. Gray asked that comments be sent to her within a month (September 25, 2003) that will give staff enough time to incorporate the suggestions. Mr. Wallace provided input.

Stakeholder input provided. Discussion on the funding issue and what is in the Plan and what can be added to the information.

Mr. Wallace reviewed the issues the group decided to work on at future meetings. Discussion of the "prioritization" of the list of issues. Dr. Gray asked that the WRAC Issues Workshop members provide guidance and recommendations to the Plan. Any work done in this committee will be provided to the full WRAC membership for action.

Due date for written comments to the staff at SFWMD were changed and comments are due on or before September 19, 2003.

#### **6. Establish Next Meeting Date and Agenda by Garrett Wallace.**

September 29, 2003 – Next Meeting of Issues Workshop to review suggested changes.  
October 20, 2003 – Meeting of Issues Workshop to look over the entire draft Plan.

On October 20, the Issues Workshop stakeholders will make written recommendations to be forwarded to the Water Resources Advisory Commission (WRAC).

Mr. Wallace will send an e-mail message to everyone on the upcoming meeting dates.

#### **5. Adjournment at 12:05 p.m.**

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Paula Moree  
District Deputy Clerk